

REMARKS

Claims 17-33, 35 and 36 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 17 is amended and claim 34 is canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Support for the amendment to claim 17 can be found in the originally filed specification, for example, at page 20, lines 5-14; Examples 3 and 4; and in claim 34 as originally filed. No new matter is added by the amendment.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Hiteshew during the telephonic conversations on June 27, 2006, and July 13, 2006, are appreciated.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objects to claims 21, 31-34 and 36 as depending from a rejected base claim. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication in the July 20 Office Action that claims 21, 31-34 and 36 contain allowable subject matter. Applicants respectfully submit that, because allowable claim 34 has been incorporated into independent claim 17, claims 21, 31-33 and 36 no longer depend from a rejected base claim and are in condition for allowance.

II. Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

In the June 13 Office Action, claims 17-30, 33 and 35 are rejected over Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 2001-053078. In the July 20 Office Action, claims 17-20, 22-30 and 35 are rejected over JP 2001-053078. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Independent claim 17 has been amended herein to incorporate the subject matter of non-rejected claim 34, which the Examiner has indicated would be allowable if placed in independent form. In light of this amendment, claim 17, and its dependent claims 18-30, 33 and 35, are patentable over JP 2001-053078. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 17-33, 35 and 36 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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